

The Virtual Coe *Being together while being apart...*

April 24, 2020

Woven Thoughts from the Collection



This basket has always been a favorite. Its humbleness betrays its complicated production, sturdy utility—with an exterior worn smooth after years of use. The beauty of the basket is readily available, its colors and textures making viewing pleasurable and has one thinking of where it came and who made it. Unfortunately, we do not know the maker's name.

The diagonal patterning is created through a weaving technique known as plaiting; in this case, the maker has carefully alternated the rows so that on the surface one sees the variation of wefts—following a vertical line

notice how the wefts go under and then over the other wefts. Confused? That's ok, look deeper—see that diagonal patterning that is alive with energy?

The weaver expertly prepared and evenly sized each ash splint, which were also dyed before commencing the construction of the basket.

Wish to learn more about Ash splint baskets? Please visit with [Kelly Church](#) (Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Ojibwe) and for [more information](#). Kelly has participated in our [Side-by-Side Artists Programs](#) by organizing two splint wood basket-making workshops at the Coe Center in 2016.

Unknown (Iroquois Confederacy), [Basket](#), c. 1825. Brown Ash splints, p aint, and Hickory or Oak, 6.5 x 12.5 x 9.75 in, (16.5 x 31.7 x 24.7 cm). NA0028



This woven trunk has it all! It is plaited. Notice how the lines of the basket are vertical and horizontal as a result of the weaver's design and intentionality. The coloring of the wefts adds to the trunk's dimensionality as does the use of thin strips of Ash in between the broad Ash wefts. Also, can you see how the dark wefts are stamped? — probably potato stamped with additional designs.

Plaited and wicker woven baskets are Indigenous to the Northeast United States and into Canada. But in the old-time—old thinking curators and collectors—unfortunately, believed the baskets were too influenced by Euro-Americans to be considered Native. “Huh”, you say, and we agree! One of the pleasures and strengths of Native arts is the constant range of new materials and ideas that are incorporated keeping the work fresh and purposeful—in a continuous state of evolving. Ted enjoyed collecting baskets. To him the basket's beauty was just as important as the maker behind it, no matter from where the basket came or who made it.

Unknown (Northeastern United States), [Storage Trunk](#), c. 1875. Ash splints, pigment, 13 x 21.5 x 14.5 in. (33 x 54.6 x 36.8 cm). NA0031



This serigraphed bag, titled *Above Beings & Us*, by [Terran Last Gun](#) (Piikani) was donated by the artist to the Coe collection after being included in the 2018 exhibition [IMPRINT](#).

Last Gun's ongoing series of serigraphed paper shopping bags *Above Beings & Us* highlights the tension between art and consumption. It is just as easy to imagine these bags both being mounted under glass or used to carry books, clothing, or groceries. They present a powerful conundrum for us to consider; if a throw-away material or commercial process is used in the making of "fine" art what exactly is the end result?

Terran's work will catch you up in the space of in-betweenness, a space that radiates with the energy of his technique, stories, colors, and shapes.

As a special treat, Bess Murphy, curator at the Coe, will be interviewing Terran for a Happy Hour hangout this Friday, April 24, 2020 at 5pm via Instagram Live. Just follow the Coe Center on [Instagram @coeartscenter](#) and tune in there!

Terran Last Gun (Piikani, Blackfeet), *Above Beings & Us*, 2018. Serigraph on paper bag, edition 3 of 10, 23.5 x 15.75 x 6 in. (59.6 x 40 x 15.2 cm). NA1802

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In another cross-platform adventure, the Coe is very excited to [partner](#) with Vital Spaces, [IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts](#), the [Georgia O'Keeffe Museum](#), the [Museum of International Folk Art](#), and the [New Mexico Museum of Art](#) for #NMTwinning. We challenge you to recreate or reinterpret works of art from New Mexico-based collections and post your pictures to Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter using #NMTwinning. Check out #mettwinning and #betweenartandquarantine for inspiration.

Go to [Vital Spaces](#) or check out the info on our Facebook and Instagram for full details!

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